



## ONE ISLAND - MANY VISIONS

### Two Day Symposium 27/28 September 2025

The symposium as part of the 'One Island – Many Visions' exhibition aims to ask questions about art and landscape, landscape and environment, and how artwork sits within this both creatively, and scientifically bringing together an interdisciplinary model of artistic practice. Pertinent to this approach it will provoke discussions about sustainability and climate change. This collaboration between the Royal Society of Sculptors & PSQT, co-curated by Dr Kate Parsons and Hannah Sofaer, respectively, encouraged the artists involved to create new work responding to the context of the local environment on Portland and Tout Quarry in particular; now a triple SSSI Nature Reserve and conservation area. The speakers have been chosen for their specialist knowledge relating to scientific and creative research that spills over into the work on show. Some of these themes relate to life cycles, mortality, mapping the landscape and how this changes, loss of habitat, recycling and use of ethical materials, origins of the English landscape and the artistic and scientific legacy going forward.

## Itinerary

### Saturday 27 September

**9.30-10**                **Coffee/tea refreshments**

**10-10.15**    **Introduction: Hannah Sofaer/Dr Kate Parsons**

**10.30-11.30**    **Speaker 1 – Gill Hedley** (Art Historian/ formerly British Council, Director Contemporary Art Society, London and currently Trustee for Art Monthly)

#### **'Of short distances and definite places'**

Some thoughts on Dorset's geology and its effect on artists, from the Romantics to the modernists and now. And other personal reflections on sculptural site-specificity: when it works and why it often does not...

**11-30-12**            **Tea Break**

**12-1.00**    **Speaker 2 – Chris Drury (Site Specific artist)**

#### **'Heart Soul Mind'**

Drury will talk about works made over the past 45 years, all of which are in some way related to just how we treat our planet. It will take the format of his new book: 'Heart Soul Mind'.

Land Walking Earth Maps

Large woven works outside using the whole body to weave

Heaven and Earth - Cloud Chambers

Systems in the Body related to Systems on the Planet

Energy

Life Death and Regeneration related to Fungi

**1-1.30**            **Panel Discussion chaired by Dr Clair Chinnery (Oxford Brookes University)**

**1.30- 2.30**            **LUNCH - Café**

**2.30-3**                **Speaker 3 – Bob Ford (Local Naturalist)**

#### **'Wildlife of Tout Quarry'**

A 30-minute illustrated talk concentrating on the relationships between the plants, butterflies and climate of Tout. Following the talk Bob will lead a walk through the quarry, weather permitting.

### 3.00 Bob Ford leads group tour of Tout Quarry

## Sunday 28 September

### 9.30-10 Coffee/tea refreshments

### 10-11 Speaker 4 - Hannah Sofaer (Artist & Creative Director of PSQT)

#### 'Living Land Archive'

Hannah has dedicated her career to the quarry environments of Portland, establishing a place for interdisciplinary exchange and knowledge transfer, leading to landscape revival and for new talent to grow. Her practice includes the creation of an extensive digital and physical 'living land archive' that relates to the experience of time, memory, and curating landscape research practices, to be accessed within the platform of Portland's 'Memory Stones'. Once an ancient sea, these 13 stones weighing 260 tons set out in a proportion of the Earth's orbit around the Sun, cast shadows that continually change their forms, creating a transitional space for the exchange of ideas and new work. Her talk will focus on strategies for mapping the underlying structure of Portland. Where geomorphology meets the landscape that we experience today.

### 11-11.30 Tea Break

### 11.30-12.30 Speaker 5 – Phoebe Cummings (Artist/Research Associate, University of Westminster)

#### 'Being Humid'

Where does sculpture begin and end? Its borders are softer, more porous, than we might imagine. It is not neatly contained within the limits of its solid materials; sculpture has atmosphere and exists as much in memory as in physical time and space, its thresholds always a negotiation between bodies. The ongoing process of making and breaking down temporary objects and environments made from raw clay since 2005, might be understood as an ecology, one where materials and activities season, flourish, emerge and re-emerge, through inevitable cycles, evolutions, and extinctions.

This talk explores Cummings' approach to working with raw clay, and the significance of water as a component of human and clay bodies. It considers plants, both real and imagined, as points of convergence, and the ways in which sculpture activates our wider understanding of environment.

### 12.30-1.30 LUNCH - Café

### 1.30-2.30 Speaker 6 – David Buckland (Founder & Director of Cape Farewell)

#### 'Climate is Culture - how Cape Farewell has inspired artists to create artworks that ask us to re-think our human footprint'

For 25 years, through a series of expeditions to the High Arctic, Scotland, Dorset and the Pacific, Cape Farewell has worked with over 350 artists and 70 climate scientists / ecologists to address the climate challenge and our human footprint. [www.capefarewell.com](http://www.capefarewell.com)

As part of the B-Side festival we installed Michael Pinsky's Pollution Pods on site in Portland and ran climate education workshops.

Our central ambition is to create artworks that stay within the boundaries of art without being activists per say. My talk will showcase how artists can be the instruments of change towards building the sustainable ecological societies we must have.

### 2.30-3 Plenary session and concluding discussion: chaired by Dr Clair Chinnery (Oxford Brookes University)